

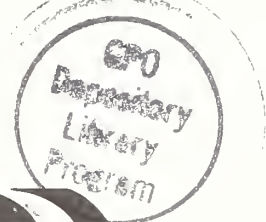
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# Farm Broadcasters Letter



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of Communications

Washington, DC 20250-1340

Letter No. 2654

March 18, 1994

**POULTRY ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM** -- USDA is proposing to strengthen the poultry inspection system. A Poultry Enhancement Program would inspect poultry carcasses both before and after internal organs are removed to ensure the product is inspected at a key point of potential contamination. No fecal matter will be allowed on raw poultry. The poultry industry will be required to use FDA-approved rinses that reduce overall bacteria levels on raw product. Carcasses will be allowed to be washed inside and outside rather than trimmed. Microbial testing will be required on a statistical sampling of the product. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy says the program incorporates science and new technologies into the nation's meat and poultry system. **Mary Dixon (202) 720-4623.**

**REDUCING E. COLI** -- A USDA one-year study of dairy herds reveals that calves grouped before weaning were nine times more likely to test positive for the pathogen E. coli 0157:H7 than if they are grouped after weaning. The study indicates that herd management may have an impact on the prevalence of the pathogen in dairy herds. The study included 1,811 dairy operations in 28 states. Cattle carry and shed the bacteria without becoming ill. The finding is part of the USDA effort to lower levels of the bacteria in cattle and thus reduce the potential for food poisoning in humans. **Contact: Steve Kinsella (202) 720-4623.**

**NEW PRODUCT** -- Research has found a use for low-grade wool that currently has no market value. Waste wool absorbs 10 to 30 times its weight in oil, offering a low-cost, fully biodegradable product that is tough enough for Arctic conditions, but gentle enough to remove oil from birds. USDA's Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization Center is providing \$700,000 to a wool environmental products consortium to turn low-grade wool into products used by industry. **Contact: Ron Buckhalt (202) 401) 4860.**

**AN EXTRA 40 BUSHELS** -- Tests show that farmers can get an extra 40 bushels per acre of corn from their irrigated fields by applying two types of nitrogen fertilizer, ammonium and nitrate. Most farmers apply only one or the other. USDA scientists have found that a 50-50 mix, applied without increasing total nitrogen, more than paid for itself by increasing yields to more than 220 bushels per acre. The mix capitalizes in how plants use nitrogen from the two sources. The plants rapidly use ammonium but must first convert the nitrate form to ammonium, resulting in a season-long delivery of nitrogen. **Contact: Ronald Follett (303) 490-8220.**

**AGSTAR PROGRAM** -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Department of Energy, and the Environmental Protection Agency have joined to established the AgSTAR program. AgSTAR will establish demonstration projects in methane recovery technologies. Program participants will be able to cut their energy bills and get extra income from manure byproducts. The program is part of the USDA effort to help create farm-based industrial products. **Contact: Douglas Beach (202) 219-0085.**

**VALUABLE INGREDIENTS** -- Numerous pharmaceuticals are derived from animal byproducts. Insulin is probably the most well known. Insulin requires the pancreases of 35 beef cattle or 130 hogs to provide the drug for one diabetic for one year. Animal byproducts are also used to treat circulatory ailments. Heparin, extracted from cow lungs and pig intestines, prevents blood clots, and is essential in open heart surgery. Hog heart valves are widely used to replace defective valves in human hearts. 30,000 heart valves from pigs have been implanted into humans. Genetically engineered pigs are creating human hemoglobin. This new supply of human-quality blood is being tested and if found successful will eliminate potential disease problems in collecting blood from humans. **Contact: Donald Van Dyne (314) 882-4512.**

**ASIAN GYPSY MOTH** -- The European gypsy moth has been established in the United States for many years. The Asian gypsy moth is now trying to get a foothold. An infestation of the Asian variety has been discovered in North Carolina, brought to the U.S. on a cargo ship from Germany. The Asian gypsy moth has a greater potential for damage because it feeds on conifers, which the European does not, and the Asian female can fly long distances, unlike the European female which does not fly. More than 400 species of trees and shrubs are at risk from Asian gypsy moths. USDA and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture have organized a \$7 million survey and eradication effort during 1994. **Contact: Ed Curlett (301) 436-3256.**

**HAY CONTINUES HIGH** -- Farm prices for alfalfa hay are continuing to rise, reaching nearly \$95 per ton in some areas. The price increases during the previous six months reflect reduced supplies of high-quality alfalfa hay desired by dairy producers, and they reflect generally tight feed supplies. Producers in Wisconsin and Minnesota are confronted with limited supplies of high-quality hay, and are purchasing from producers in other States. **Contact: Tim Cole (202) 219-0840.**

**SOYBEAN REFERENDUM** -- A majority of soybean producers voting in a national referendum last month approved continuation of the National Soybean Promotion and Research Program. Changes that the referendum put into motion become effective April 1, 1994. Of the 85,606 valid ballots cast, 53.8 percent favored the program. **Contact: Connie Crunkleton (202) 720-8998.**

**BONE LOSS** -- Tooth loss may be an important early warning of bone loss in women as they age. In a USDA study of 329 women past menopause, bone loss correlated directly with tooth loss. The more teeth lost the less bone women had in the spine, wrist and hip. Those are the three areas most prone to fractures from osteoporosis. The findings suggest that dentists may become key in identifying high-risk women before they develop osteoporosis. **Contact: Elizabeth Krall (617) 556-3074.**

**WEIGHT LOSS** -- Tests show that nicotinamide, a form of the B vitamin Niacin, suppresses hunger. Researchers at the University of Georgia, Athens, have discovered that high doses of nicotinamide lower food intakes and weight gain in laboratory animals. The study indicates that the use of nicotinamide may have human applications. Diets supplemented with nicotinamide could one day be a useful therapy in treating human obesity. **Contact: Dan Rahn (912) 681-5189.**

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA #1919** -- Malaria is creeping back into the United States. **Jim Henry** talks with USDA chemist **Orville Levander** about old and new treatments for malaria. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

**CONSUMER TIME #1401** -- Coping with military base closings; what do food shoppers look for; flooding again this year; controlling mice; high-tech wine test. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

**AGRITAPE FEATURES #1911** -- Agriculture Secretary testifies for GATT; floods delay planting; U.S. rice in Japan; grain bin computer model; Africanized bees - not much sting. (Weekly reel of features.)

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Thursday, March 24, U.S. Ag trade update; Friday, March 25, hogs and pigs report; Tuesday, March 29, weekly weather and crop report; Wednesday, March 30 ag prices. **These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.**

**USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359**

**COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545**

*Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.*

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- 1994 loan rates and advance payments are reported by **Eric Parsons**.

**ACTUALITIES** -- Secretary of Agriculture **Mike Espy** on GATT; USDA chief meteorologist **Norton Strommen** on weather and crop conditions.

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- **Pat O'Leary** reports on new uses of agricultural products; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on non-destructive testing of wood.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 4, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT; Saturdays 10:00 a.m., EDT; Mondays 8:00 a.m., EDT.*



## OFFMIKE

**COTTON**...planting gets underway in California on the first day of spring, says **George Gatley** (Western Agri-Radio Networks, Yuma, AZ). Acreage will be slightly larger than last year, 1.1 million. Cotton has already emerged in Arizona. George says the efforts to reduce whitefly infestations appear to be working. Reduced egg masses were seen last fall, indicating that numbers may be smaller this spring.

**BIGGEST CONCERN**...of farmers in the region served by **Peggy Kaye Fish** (WCVS/WFMB, Springfield, IL) is the outlook for flooding this spring. Rivers are at flood stage, the ground is saturated, the outlook is for rain, levees aren't repaired, and the snow in the upper Mississippi is melting. Ag Day Breakfast on March 18 was co-hosted by Peggy's stations. 350 people, including the Chamber of Commerce, were served and heard leading ag speakers.

**ETHANOL**...story is heating up again, says **Amy Alberts** (KROC, Rochester, MN). Studies by the Missesota Corn Growers find ethanol plants are more efficient in operation than oil refineries.

### *Farm Broadcasters Letter*



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Room 528A  
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**LIVE COVERAGE**...of the North Dakota Winter Show, in Valley City, was broadcast by **Lyle Romine** and **Mick Kjar** (America Ag Net/WDAY, Fargo, ND). Over 70,000 people viewed the exhibits, programs, and national shows of several cattle breeds. Mick says the region usually gets most of its moisture during the winter months, and on that basis this winter began last June. Flood warnings have been issued. Warmer temperatures are melting snow and breaking river ice. Wildlife have been trapped on ice floating down the Missouri River.

**RECOVERY**...from the ice storm that hit Mississippi and Tennessee last month has been slow. **Bob Wade** (Progressive Farmer Network, Starkville, MS) says some producers were without electric power for more than four weeks. The storm hit the timber industry hard, setting it back ten years. Bob says the agriculture minister from the former Soviet Republic of Uzbekistan visited the network recently and grappled with concepts such as advertising, the network purchasing its equipment with profits rather than government grants, and a media organization paying taxes to the government. Bob says the delegation learned much about modern agriculture. It was a return visit of sorts. Bob visited Uzbekistan two years ago.

VIC POWELL

Office of Communications